



Origins of The Cold War

Western European integration

Christian Bailey:

You've described there how in many ways European powers sought to maximise their autonomy from the US during the later stages of the Cold War - it's an interesting jumping-off point because I think for the earlier stages of the Cold War, the Americans are often given a great deal of credit for pushing forward European integration, but I'm wondering whether European integration didn't just help to firm up this US-led Western bloc, but in some ways created a community whose values in some way perhaps conflicted with those of the US bloc?

Professor Anne Deighton:

You've raised a lot of important issues there within the umbrella of that one question. I think that the first point we have to get straight is that it was very important for the United States to support Western European integration, particularly in the earlier years. Partly because they'd put a lot of money into Marshall aid, they put in 12.5 billion dollars. That is a lot of money if you do the calculations to see how much it represents in today's expenditure. So they had to explain to their own public why it was important for Western Europe to become integrated as it could be. And that story of Americans talking to themselves about Europe runs right through the Cold War. But the point you've focused on is almost more interesting, it's what did the Europeans make of what was going on. And it is true and I am of the belief that in the early years you can say the European community was in a sense a nested community snuggled safely under the nuclear protection of NATO protection. The military protection was delivered by the United States and it was within that cradle of protection that the West Europeans could begin to develop; to revitalise, to modernise, to bring up their welfare states to much higher standards and so we have a sense that during the course of the Cold War the issues change and the issues about integration change. and the Western Europeans do begin to feel that their project is their own, they begin to take ownership of it.

However, we have to remember that the Americans were very keen on European integration. As you will know no doubt, during the late 50's and 1960s they pushed very hard for Britain to join the European Community and the British applied very reluctantly in 1961 and they applied pretty reluctantly again in 1967. So you have Western pressure all the time, American pressure all the time upon the integration project. However, it is true that by living together, states and countries like families or communities learn to build their own sets of values and so

the values within the European Economic Community and the European Communities as we call it after 1967 - these values become more European, they are driven by values which we felt in Western Europe were particular to us. This was helped by the Council of Europe which is another ideas-based organisation which is founded in 1949, well before the European Economic Community and this set out values of individual freedoms, the rule of law, equality before law, citizenship, property rights, religious rights et cetera. And the United States is not a member of the Council of Europe, it is a European institution. So over time, the Europeans do very incrementally acquire some of their own ways of looking at the world which isn't always an American way of looking at the world.

It's particularly interesting that this does not apply to foreign policy early on, when it comes to foreign policies, Western European states are more than happy to organise their own foreign policy or to work through NATO. They don't even begin to talk about coordinating their foreign policies until the 1970s, so up until the 1970s, Western Europeans are very happy to leave foreign policy to the greater powers through their own national experiences and through their own relationships with NATO.